

Project Overview

Fifth Ward Urban Redevelopment Plan

Purpose

The Urban Redevelopment Plan (Plan) addresses neighborhood revitalization by returning abandoned tax delinquent properties (See Map 1.1) to productive use while providing an increase in affordable housing opportunities. The Plan also addresses abating health and safety nuisances, returning abandoned property to tax revenue producing land, enhancing the quality of life, eliminating blight, spurring economic growth and redevelopment, and ensuring community stability.

The Urban Redevelopment Plan will be utilized by the Land Assemblage Redevelopment Authority (LARA) to guide decision-making when responding to development proposals for the purchase and redevelopment of property acquired through foreclosure. This document outlines recommendations collected from the community via public community workshops to guide the selection of proposals. The recommendations provide a framework for redevelopment and are flexible enough to allow for a range of development scenarios while being responsive to community preferences.

Background

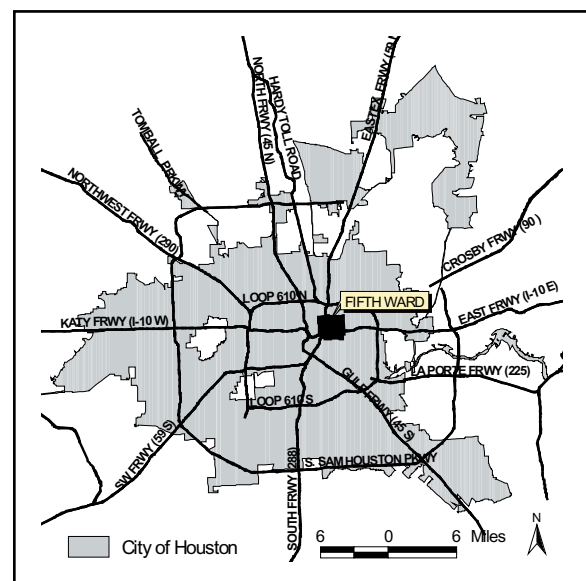
Houston City Council initially approved the creation of the Land Assemblage Redevelopment Authority (LARA) in October 1999 to oversee the redevelopment of tax delinquent property. LARA was formed by the City of Houston along with participation from Harris County and HISD. Harris County also represents the Houston Community College System and numerous other taxing entities. An interlocal agreement was signed by all taxing jurisdictions and became an active program in November 2003.

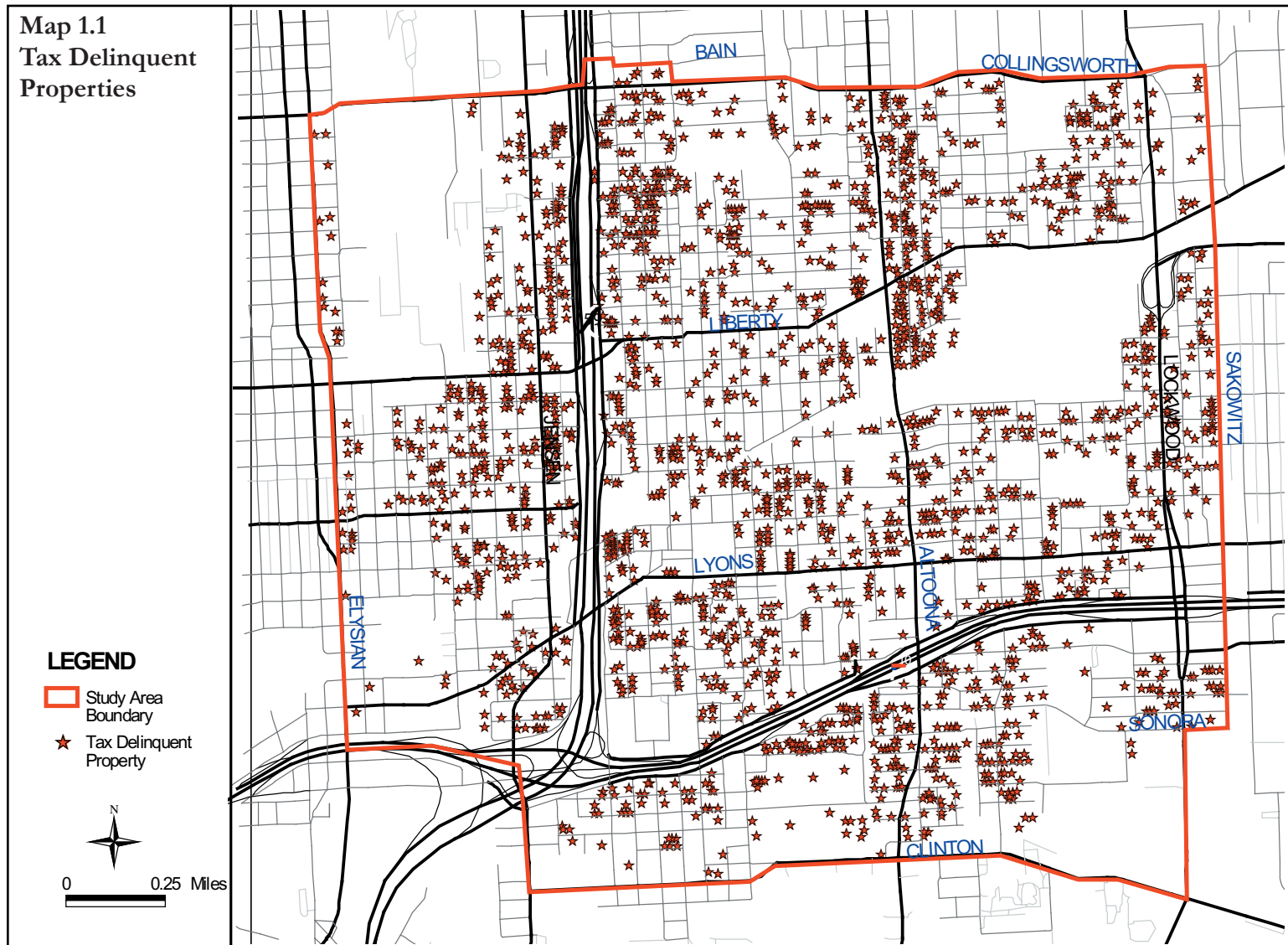
LARA obtains tax delinquent land through the foreclosure process and will convey that land to non-profit corporations

and others in developing affordable housing. LARA's charge is to solicit, review and select development proposals to build or rehabilitate affordable housing and other land uses consistent with neighborhood plans and City and County Joint Neighborhood Goals (See Appendix C).

Study Area

The focus area included in the Fifth Ward Urban Redevelopment Plan is located just northeast of downtown Houston. The area is bound by Elysian to the west, Collingsworth to the north, Sakowitz to the east and Clinton Drive to the south. The targeted boundary covers approximately 2,739 acres and lies within the Greater Fifth Ward Super Neighborhood SN 55. Located near the center of Houston, Fifth Ward is within 10-15 minutes of downtown, the medical center, two major parks, the City's two newest sports stadiums, the Convention Center and several other major centers of economic development and entertainment.





Community Analysis

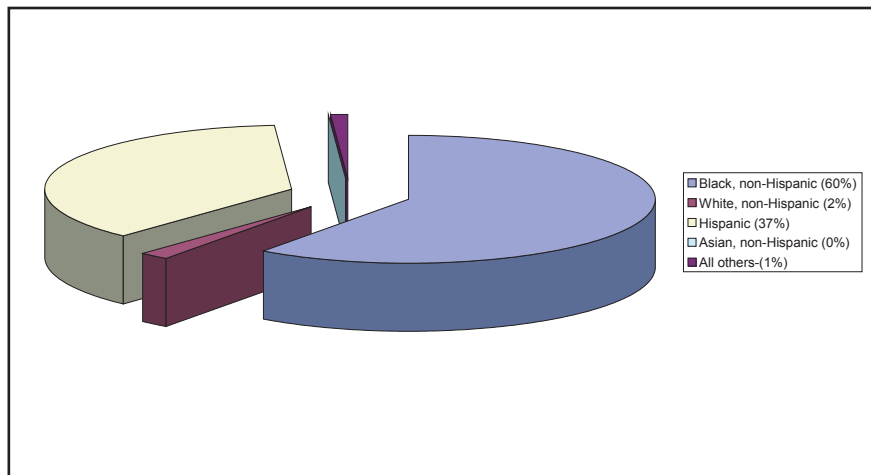
Population/Age

Within the study area boundaries, the Census 2000 population was 21,640. Of these householders, 21% were between the ages of 15 and 25, 45% were between the ages of 35 and 59, and 34% were 60 years or older.

Race/Ethnicity

Historically, Fifth Ward has been a predominately African-American community (79% in 1990). While African-Americans are still a majority, Hispanics have increased their presence dramatically since 1990 and now comprise 37% of the population.

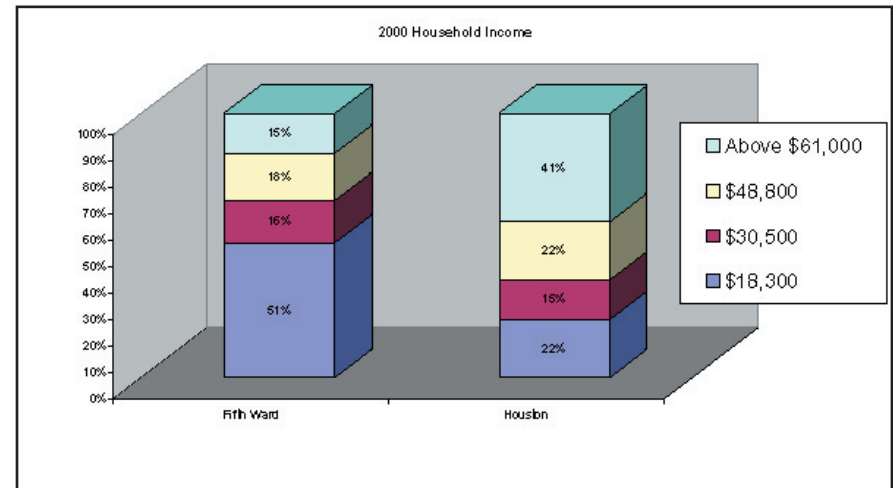
Figure 1: Fifth Ward Ethnicity in 2000



Household Income

Fifth Ward incomes are relatively low compared to the citywide median family household income of \$48,800. The majority (51%) of residents in Fifth Ward have incomes less than \$18,300.

Figure 2: Household Income 2000



Housing

Fifth Ward has an aging housing stock with relatively few new units built in recent years. Most residents in Fifth Ward are renters (67%). The majority of residents who do own homes are between the ages of 65 and 74. The vacancy rate is relatively high at 14 percent compared to the citywide figure of 8 percent.

- Permit data between 2000 and 2003 shows 154 properties were demolished while 91 permits were issued for new

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construction. See **Map 2.1 - Land Use and Permit Activity**.

- 8,420 units of housing are located in the Study Area. (See Map 2.1.) The majority of these homes were built between 1950-1959. Approximately 20% of housing units were built between 1940-1949.
- Seven percent of the housing stock lacks complete plumbing. This is higher than the city average of less than two percent.

Land Use

Fifty-five percent (55%) of all lots in the study area are single-family. One-third of the lots (32%) are vacant. Multi-family, commercial and public/institutional land uses each represent 3 percent of the parcels. Industrial has the smallest percentage with only 2 percent of the number of parcels. See **Map 2.1 – Land Use and Permit Activity**.

Property Value

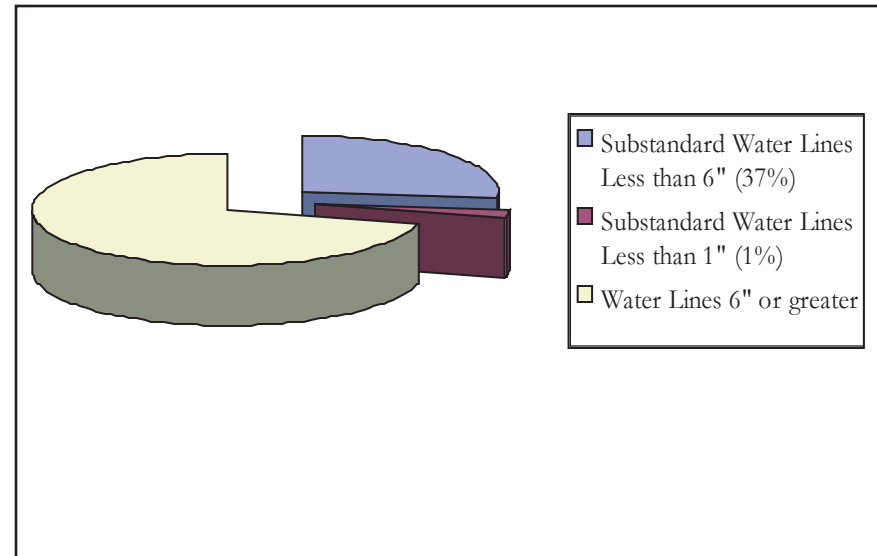
Property values in Fifth Ward are significantly lower than the rest of the city. See **Map 2.2 - Property Value**.

- Seventy-one percent (71%), or 6,428, of parcels are valued at less than \$25,000.
- Twenty-one percent (21%) of parcels are valued between \$25,000 - \$50,000.
- Only 8 percent of parcels are valued at \$50,000 or higher.
- The average single-family parcel size is 5,045 square feet.

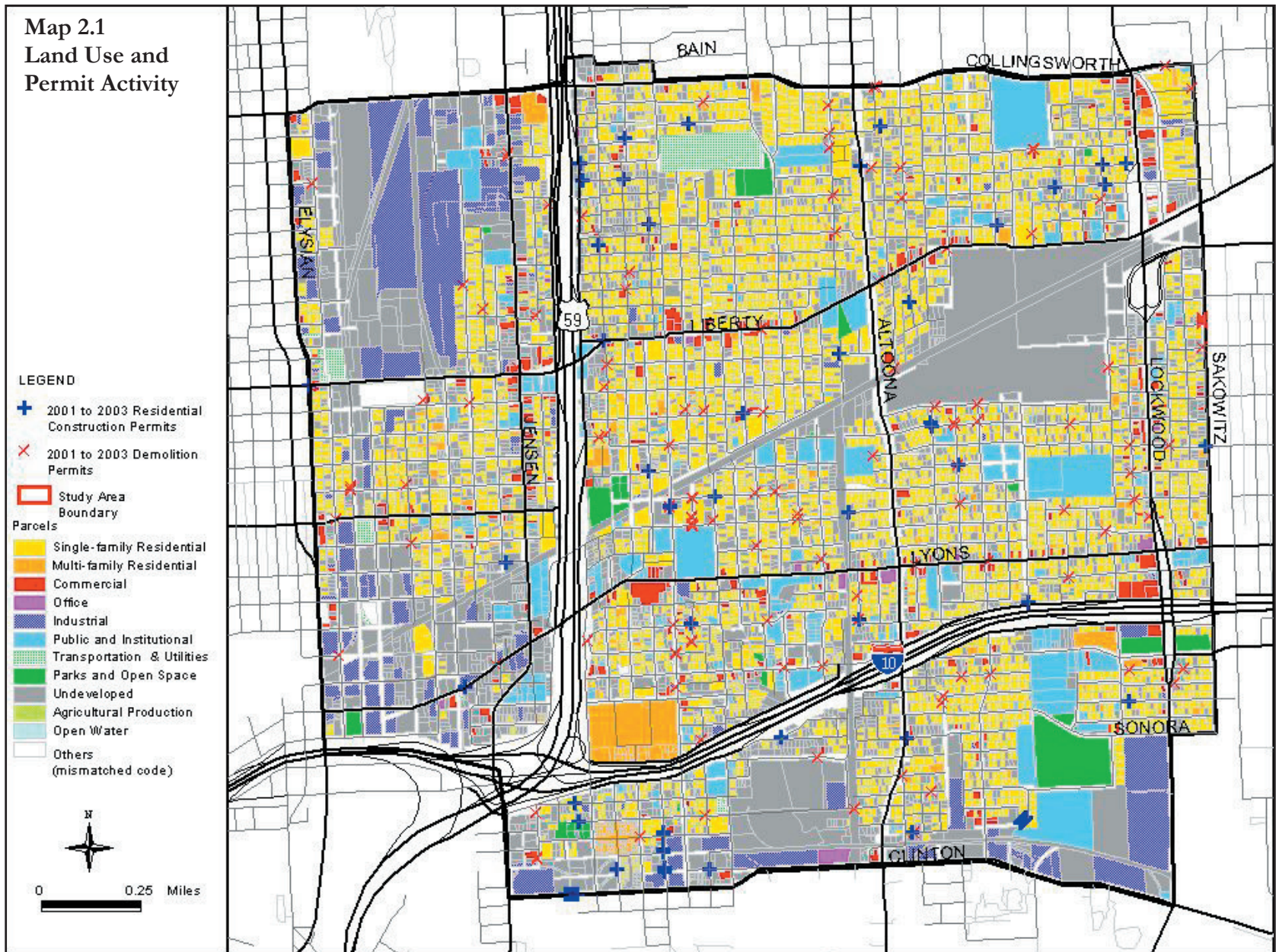
Infrastructure

Thirty-seven percent of the water lines in the study area are less than 6 inches. Any size less than 6 inches is considered substandard for single-family residential development. Larger sized lines may be needed for medium density development.

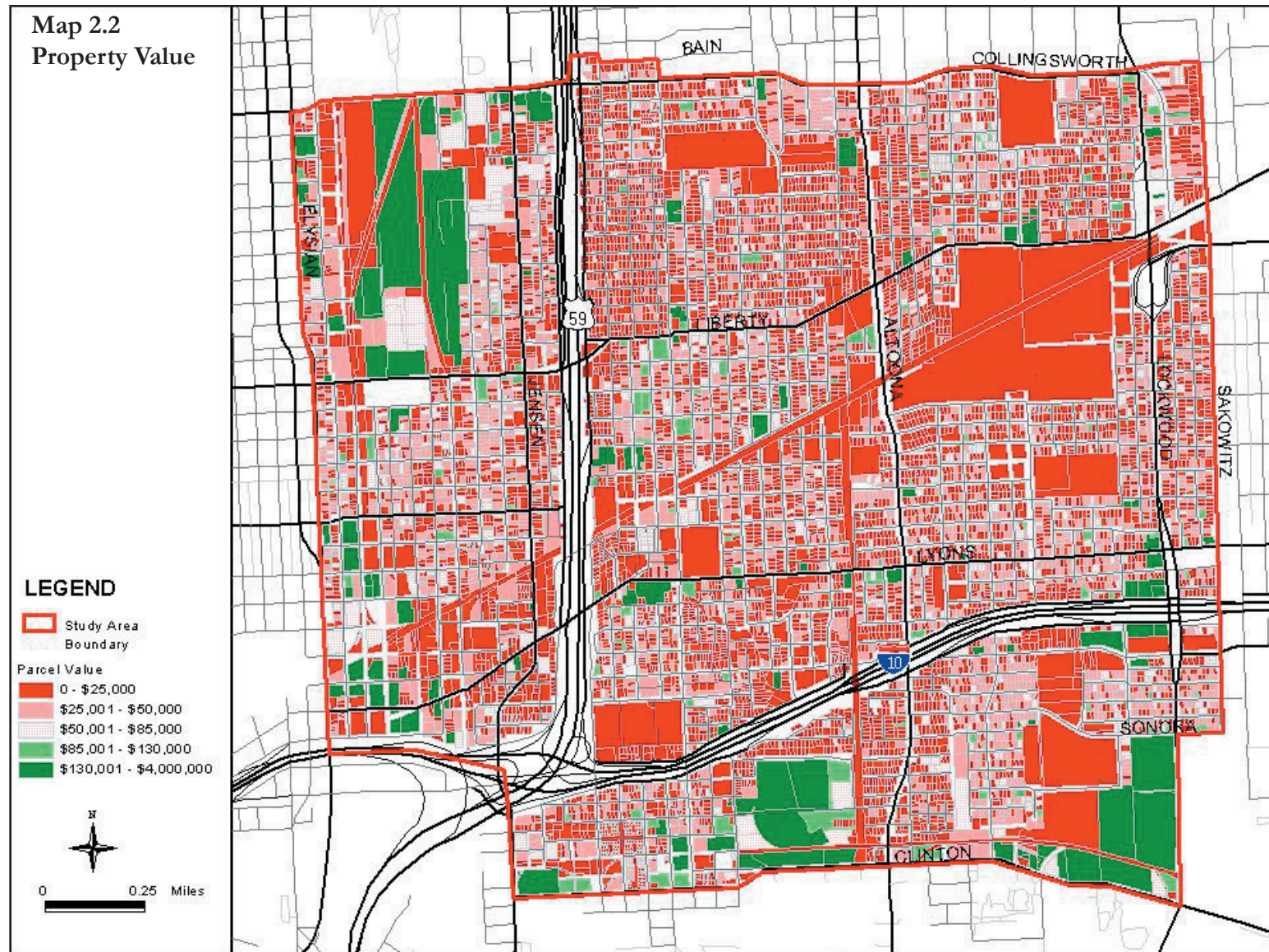
Figure 3: Fifth Ward Water Lines

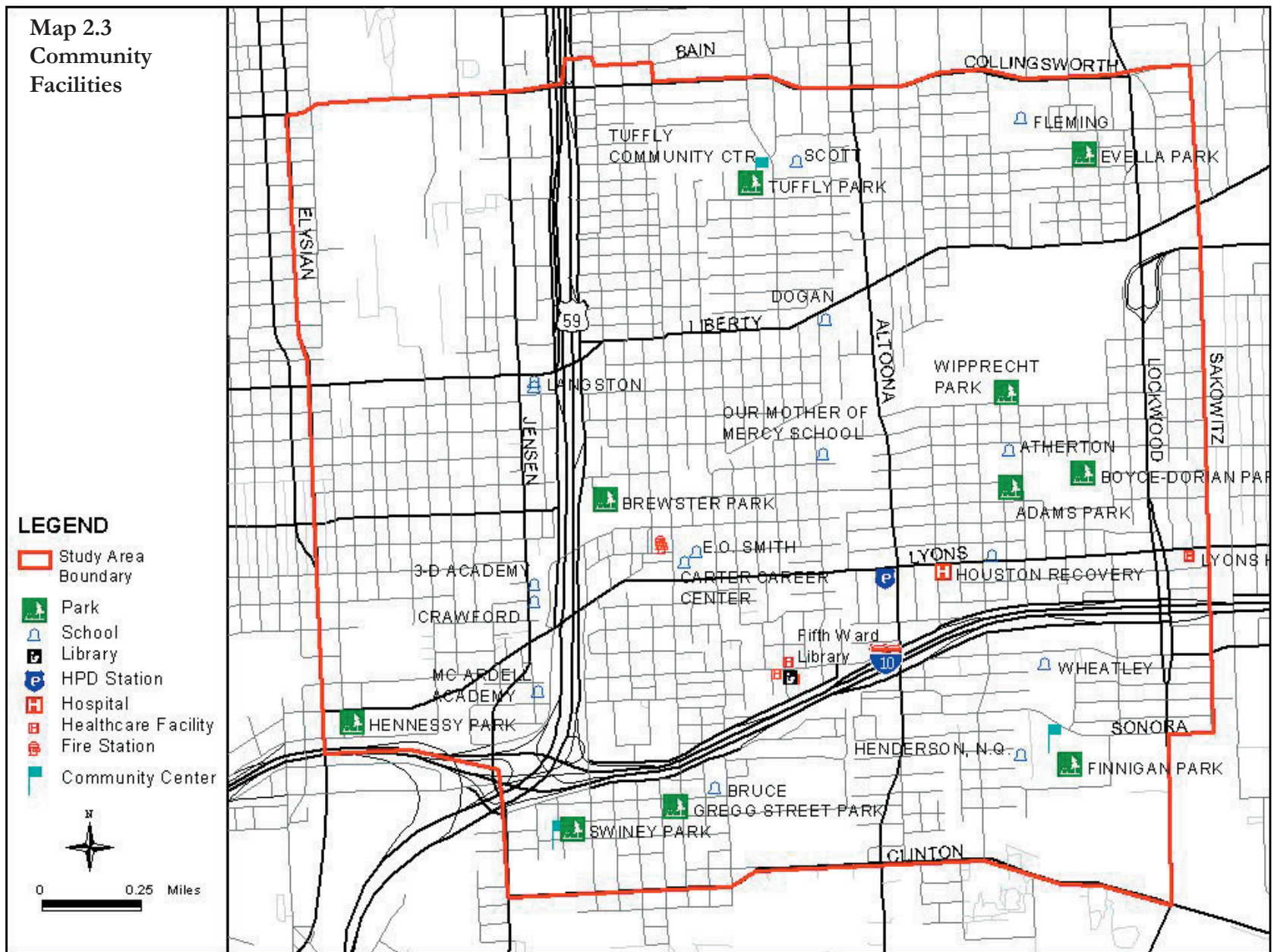


Map 2.1
Land Use and
Permit Activity



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Fifth Ward Community Workshop



Community participants at Fifth Ward Workshop